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ABSTRACT

Results are presented of a telephone survey of 800 citizens indicating their opinions about the public schools in Michigan. Questions were asked on: (1) level and scope of information known about the schools; (2) school visitation frequency; (3) performance of schools; (4) report card rating of schools; (5) likes, dislikes about the schools; (6) biggest problem of the local Board of Education; (7) awareness of the State Board of Education's "Blueprint for Action"; (8) reaction to: longer school day and year, proposed graduation requirements, suggested uses of competency tests, proposals to increase state funding, and the proposal to certify school administrators; (9) support for a system of accreditation of local schools; (10) opinions on teacher salaries and the teaching profession, on school funding/spending practices, and on six other recommendations for local districts; (11) willingness to pay more school taxes; (12) familiarity with Homestead Property Tax Credit; and (13) opposition/support for District consolidation/ annexation. The composition of the survey sample is also given. The overview includes a copy of the questionnaire, in which responses are reported in percentages. (JD)

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SP 025 730

# OPINIONS OF MICHIGAN CITIZENS ABOUT THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*

3rd ANNUAL STATEWIDE

MICHIGAN EDUCATION SURVEY

*

CONDUCTED BY

PROJECT OUTREACH

Michigan State Board of Education

May 1-3, 1984

Project Outreach
of the Michigan State Board of Education
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All figures shown in this report are in percentages, rounded to the nearest percentage. When columns do not total 100%, it is due to rounding. When responses greatly exceed 100% it is due to multiple responses.

## METHODOLOGY OF THE SURVEY

A public opinion survey of adult citizens in Michigan was conducted from May 1-3, 1984. The poll was conducted in telephone households of the state. This survey, which sought public opinion toward the public schools, was the Third Annual Michigan Education Poll, conducted as part of the Michigan State Board of Education's "Project Outreach".

Telephone numbers included in the sample were randomly generated by a computer in a sampling process known as random digit dialing (RDD). Thus, both listed and unlisted telephone households had an equal chance of being randomly selected. The sample was drawn on a proportionate basis by density of telephone households in the state.

Only one adult (18 years of age or older) was randomly selected. Respondents were selected based upon a random Respondent Selection Table developed by Kish and Carter. Average length of the interviews was 18 minutes.

A total of 40 experienced adults was utilized as interviewers in the survey. Each interviewer was trained in the use of the questionnaire by Kathy Feaster of the Project Outreach Technical Assistance Team or by Ned S. Hubbell, Project Outreach Director. All interviewing was conducted from 5:00 to 9:30 p.m., with supervisors present during each of the three nights of polling.

A total of 800 interviews was completed. This sample size is based on 95% confidence that sample error is no larger than 3.5%.

All survey data was tabulated through computer facilities at Michigan State University. This report was written by Ned S. Hubbell.

Survey results are reported here for two major subgroups. The first are citizens who live in households where there are public school students (PUB. SCH. HSLD.).

These opinions are compared with those of citizens in households where there are no public school students (NOT PUB. SCH. HSLD.). These are homes in which the children, if present, are either pre-school age or attend parochial or private schools. In addition, this subgroup also includes citizens with children not presently enrolled in school, or the youngest child had graduated from high school, as well as those adults who have no children.

Other subgroup demographic information is shown in the composition of the sample, at the end of this report. Reports of the opinions of other survey subgroups may be obtained from Project Outreach.

#

## LEVEL, SCOPE OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The typical Michigan adult is fairly well informed about the public schools in his or her community. Three out of every ten persons interviewed (30%) said they knew "quite a lot about the schools". That percentage compares with 31% of respondents in the 1982 Michigan Education Poll. Another 39% in this year's survey said they knew some things about the local schools.

Michigan citizens appear somewhat better informed when it comes to school information than was reflected in the 1983 Gallup Poll, as can be noted in the table below.

"How much do you feel you know about the public schools in your community?"

| | ('83 Gallup | ('82 State) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quite a lot | (22%) | (31%) | 30% | 41% | 24% |
| Some | (42 ) | (36 ) | 39 | 48 | 35 |
| Very little | (29 ) | (25 ) | 29 | 11 | 37 |
| Nothing | ( 7 ) | ( 8 ) | 2 | - | 3 |
| Can't Say | ( - ) | ( 1 ) | - | - | - |

Younger adults are much more knowledgeable about the public schools than are older citizens. Nearly one-half (48%) of those over 65 said they know very little about the public schools in their community.

| | 18-24 Yrs. Old | 25-34 Yrs. Old | 35-54 Yrs. Old | 55-64 Yrs. Old | Over 65 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quite a lot | 30% | 24% | 38% | 28% | 21% |
| Some | 43 | 42 | 40 | 37 | 30 |
| Very little | 26 | 32 | 19 | 35 | 46 |
| Nothing | 2 | 2 | 3 | - | 2 |
| Can't Say | - | - | - | - | - |

Major sources of information about the public schools, respondents said, are word-of-mouth of other people (42%), daily newspapers (36%), school children (25%) and school employees (15%).

However, parents of public school students have a different communication network than do citizens with no children in school. They listen to and depend upon information primarily from their children. The "non-parent" relies on what other people tell them about the schools.

| Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|
| 1. My children (41%) | 1. Word-of-mouth (45%) |
| 2. Word-of-mouth (34%) | 2. Daily newspaper (38%) |
| 3. Daily newspaper (32%) | 3. Children (17%) |
| 4. Parent-teacher conferences (20%) | 4. School employees (14%) |

Information sources were identified by responses to this "open", free response question:

"Where do you get your information that you use to judge the quality of schools in your community? Is there any other source of information you use?"*

| | ('83 Gallup) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hsld. | Not Pub. Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Word-of-mouth (parents and others) | (56%) | 42% | 34% | 45% |
| Daily newspaper | (42 ) | 36 | 32 | 38 |
| Children; my children | (36 ) | 25 | 41 | 17 |
| School employees | (24 ) | 15 | 19 | 14 |
| Direct observation, own experience | ( 8 ) | 14 | 18 | 12 |
| School district newsletter | ( - ) | 11 | 13 | 10 |
| Board members, meetings | ( - ) | 8 | 12 | 6 |
| School building notes, newsletters | ( - ) | 8 | 13 | 6 |
| Parent-teacher conferences | ( - ) | 7 | 20 | 1 |
| Television/radio | (19 ) | 9 | 4 | 12 |
| None; no sources | ( - ) | 5 | - | 7 |
| Other | ( 4 ) | 3 | 5 | 2 |
| Can't say | ( 7 ) | 3 | 1 | 4 |

*(Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses.)

Two-thirds of those polled (66%) said that since last September they had received a letter, pamphlet or other printed material telling what the local public schools were doing. Another 40% said they had been in a local public school since last September, when the school was in session and students were in classes. Further, 38% said they attended a school play, concert or program in a local public school this school year, 35% said they have attended a local school athletic event, and 31% have met with a teacher or school administrator about their own child this school year. Poll data also indicated that one out of every five adults (20%) this year has helped out in some way as a local school volunteer.

| "RECEIVED ANY NEWSLETTER, PAMPHLET, OR ANY OTHER MATERIAL TELLING WHAT THE LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE DOING?" | ('83 Gallup) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hsld. | Not Pub. Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | (32%) | 66% | 86% | 56% |
| No | ( - ) | 33 | 13 | 43 |
| Can't say | ( - ) | 1 | 1 | 1 |

| "ATTENDED A LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOL ATHLETIC EVENT?" | ('83 Gallup) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hsld. | Not Pub. Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | (24%) | 38% | 69% | 25% |
| No | ( - ) | 62 | 31 | 75 |

| "ATTENDED A SCHOOL PLAN, CONCERN OR PROGRAM IN ANY LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOL?" | ('83 Gallup) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hsld. | Not Pub. Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | (25%) | 35% | 54% | 23% |
| No | ( - ) | 65 | 46 | 77 |

| "MET WITH ANY TEACHERS OR ADMINISTRATORS IN THE LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOL ABOUT YOUR OWN CHILD?" | ('83 Gallup) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hsld. | Not Pub. Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | (21%) | 31% | 79% | 8% |
| No | ( - ) | 68 | 21 | 92 |

| "HELPED OUT IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL AS A VOLUNTEER?" | ('83 Gallup) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hsld. | Not Pub. Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | ( - ) | 20% | 42% | 9% |
| No | ( - ) | 80 | 59 | 90 |

| "ATTENDED ANY PUBLIC MEETING DEALING WITH THE LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOL SITUATION?" | ('83 Gallup) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hsld. | Not Pub. Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | ( 8%) | 17% | 29% | 11% |
| No | ( - ) | 83 | 71 | 89 |

| "ATTENDED A PTA/PTO MEETING?" | ('83 Gallup) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hsld. | Not Pub. Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | (14%) | 13% | 29% | 6% |
| No | ( - ) | 86 | 70 | 94 |

| | Pub. Sch. Elementary Hslds. | Pub. Sch. Jr. High Hslds. | Pub. Sch. High Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 37% | 26% | 23% |
| No | 63 | 74 | 77 |
| Can't Say | - | - | 1 |

| "ATTENDED A SCHOOL BOARD MEETING?" | ('83 Gallup) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hsld. | Not Pub. Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | ( 8%) | 11% | 17% | 8% |
| No | ( - ) | 89 | 83 | 92 |
| Can't Say | ( - ) | - | - | - |

| "WRITTEN ANY LETTER TO THE SCHOOL BOARD, NEWSPAPER, OR ANY OTHER ORGANIZATION ABOUT THE LOCAL SCHOOL SITUATION?" | ('83 Gallup) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hsld. | Not Pub. Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | ( 4%) | 5% | 8% | 4% |
| No | ( - ) | 94 | 93 | 96 |

SCHOOL VISITATION BY CITIZENS

Four out of every ten citizens (40%) reported visiting the local public schools since last September, when the school was in session and students were in classes. As might be expected, those most likely to visit are citizens with children attending public schools (63% visitation). The vast majority of citizens (71%) with no public school students have not been in a local public school in recent months.

Nearly all (93%) of the respondents who had visited a local public school reported that the school was fairly neat, clean and well-maintained.

"Since last September, have you been in a local public school, when it was in session and students were in classes?"

| | All Resp. | Public Hslds. | Priv./paro. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 40% | 63% | 29% | 29% |
| No | 60 | 37 | 71 | 71 |

| | Pub. Sch. Elementary Hsld. | Pub. Sch. Jr. High Hsld. | Pub. Sch. High Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 68% | 61% | 56% |
| No | 33 | 39 | 44 |
| Can't Say | - | - | - |

"Was the school building fairly neat, clean and well-maintained?"

| | (40% of All Resp. | (63% of Pub. Sch. Hsids.) | (29% of Not Pub. Sch. Hsld.) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 93% | 96% | 90% |
| No | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| Can't Say | 1 | 1 | 2 |

## PERFORMANCE OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Four out of every ten citizens (40%) in Michigan feel the quality of local public education has remained about the same in the past few years. Another one-fourth, however, (23%) think the quality of education is getting better, a dramatic reversal from opinions stated one year ago.

In the 1983 Michigan Education Poll, only 16% said the quality of education is improving, compared with 25% who felt such quality was getting worse. This year, 23% said education offered locally is better, with 16% saying it is worse.

These opinions were expressed when respondents were asked this question:

"During the past few years, would you say that the local public schools in your community have been getting better in quality, getting worse, or staying about the same?"

Responses shown in the Table below indicate little difference of opinion between those who have students in the public schools and those who have no school-age children.

| | ('83 State) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hsld. | Not Pub. Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Getting better | (16%) | 23% | 26% | 22% |
| Worse | (25 ) | 16 | 14 | 17 |
| Better and worse | ( 5 ) | 7 | 6 | 7 |
| About the same | (38 ) | 40 | 43 | 36 |
| Can't Say | (16 ) | 14 | 5 | 18 |

Respondents who said the quality of education is getting worse were asked for reasons for that opinion.

(IF "WORSE") "Why do you feel that way?"*

| | (16% of All Resp.) | (17% of Pub. Sch. Hslds.) | (18% of Not Pub. Sch. Hslds.) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Students aren't well prepared | 22% | 18% | 24% |
| Discipline problems | 21 | 21 | 22 |
| School programs reduced | 18 | 23 | 16 |
| Quality of teaching declining | 17 | 30 | 11 |
| Poor local, state $ support | 15 | 23 | 11 |
| Schs. have negative reputation | 11 | - | 16 |
| Violence in schools | 6 | - | 9 |
| Poor administration | 5 | 11 | 2 |
| Don't teach basics | 3 | - | 5 |
| Too many frills, extras | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Poor $ management | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Miscellaneous | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| Can't Say | 2 | - | 3 |

*(Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses.)

## REPORT CARD RATING OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

When asked to rate the quality of the public schools in their community, almost one-half of Michigan's adult (49%) gave their local public schools an A or B rating.

That overall assessment is slightly higher than data shown in the 1983 Michigan Education Poll and is significantly higher than the A and B ratings of 42% recorded by Gallup pollsters in the nationwide 1984 Gallup Poll on "Attitudes Toward the Public Schools."

In this years Michigan "report card" rating, 8% gave the public schools an A rating, 41% a B rating, 29% a C, 6% a D, and 2% an E rating. Another 13% were unable to give the schools a performance rating.

As was noted in each of the first two state-wide education polls, citizens with public school students in their household gave significantly higher ratings to public schools than did those citizens with no public school students. This year, 62% of the responding public school households awarded an A, or B, rating, up 6% over one year ago.

In fact, report card ratings of the public for Michigan's public schools have been rising over the past three years. This is in marked contrast to ratings which were dropping as recorded each year in recent annual Gallup polls on education.

The Gallup question, asked again in Michigan:

> "Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, or E to describe the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools in your community were graded in the same way. What grade would you give your local public school system -- A, B, C, D, or E?"

Michigan findings are shown as compared with the recent Gallup study:

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. | ('83 State) | ('82 State) | ('84 Gallup) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | 8% | 11% | 7% | 8% | 9% | 10% |
| B | 41 | 51 | 35 | 38 | 33 | 32 |
| C | 29 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 35 | 35 |
| D | 6 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 11 |
| E | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| Can't Say | 13 | 1 | 19 | 12 | 10 | 8 |

The Table below indicates that parents of students in the elementary school grades rate the schools more highly than do those citizens with students in secondary schools.

| | Pub. Sch. Elementary Hslds. | Pub. Sch. Jr. High Hslds. | Pub. Sch. High Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | 8% | 11% | 11% |
| B | 60 | 51 | 44 |
| C | 24 | 28 | 35 |
| D | 7 | 5 | 3 |
| E | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Can't Say | 1 | - | 2 |

## LIKES, DISLIKES ABOUT THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The typical Michigan citizen both praises and criticizes the public schools in his or her community.

Survey respondents praised, and in this order, good teachers (23%), the school curriculum (21%), parent/community involvement in schools (13%), sports, athletics (13%) and other extra-curricular activities for students (10%).

Citizens with students enrolled in public schools were very high in praise for teachers. Forty-three percent (43%) of all praise focused on teachers, compared with 14% of teacher mentions by citizens who have students in the schools.

The Table below summarizes all responses to the "open" question seeking free answers about "likes" of the public schools program.

"What are the things you like about the public schools in your community?"

| LIKES:* | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hsld. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Good teachers | 23% | 43% | 14% |
| School curriculum | 21 | 25 | 19 |
| Parent/community involvement | 13 | 19 | 10 |
| Sports, athletics | 13 | 14 | 13 |
| Other extra activities | 11 | 15 | 10 |
| Special services provided | 10 | 17 | 8 |
| Individual attention offered | 9 | 17 | 5 |
| School facilities, resources | 8 | 10 | 8 |
| Nothing | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| Schools close to home | 6 | 7 | 6 |
| Good administrators | 6 | 10 | 4 |
| Student behavior, discipline | 6 | 8 | 5 |
| Size of school, district | 5 | 7 | 4 |
| Good quality of education offered | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Everything | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Transportation | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Miscellaneous | 4 | 2 | 5 |
| Can't Say | 24 | 8 | 32 |

*(Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses.)

When survey respondents were asked what they did not like about the public schools in their community, one out of every five persons (20%) had no complaints, and another 21% could not think of any specific area of criticism.

The remaining replies to the question seeking criticism focused chiefly on three areas -- some teachers (13%), weaknesses in the school curriculum (13%), and poor discipline in the schools (12%).

"What don't you like about the public schools?"

| DISLIKES:* | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Nothing disliked | 20% | 22% | 19% |
| Some teachers | 13 | 20 | 10 |
| Weak curriculum | 13 | 16 | 12 |
| Poor discipline | 12 | 14 | 12 |
| Lack of basics | 7 | 7 | 8 |
| Program, financial cutbacks | 7 | 11 | 5 |
| Poor money management | 6 | 8 | 5 |
| Student behavior | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| Administrators | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| Board policies | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| High school taxes | 4 | 2 | 5 |
| Transportation | 3 | 5 | 2 |
| Overcrowded schools | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| Everything | 2 | - | 3 |
| School closings | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Too much emphasis on sports | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Substance abuse | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Violence in school | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Poor facilities | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Poor communication | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| Salaries too high | 1 | - | 1 |
| Miscellaneous | 5 | 5 | 6 |
| Can't Say | 21 | 8 | 28 |

*(Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses.)

## BIGGEST PROBLEM OF THE LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION

The biggest problem confronting local school boards -- for the third consecutive year, is balancing the school system's budget.

Financial problems were named in a free response to the poll's question about biggest problems by 37% of those interviewed. Last year, finances was named by 43% of those polled in the 1983 Michigan Education Poll. In the preceeding year, 37% cited finance as the major problem of their local school board.

Only school discipline (7%) and teacher negotiations (7%) were named as other major problems. One fourth (25%) of those with children enrolled in the schools were unaware of any major problems of their local board of education, as were 39% of respondents with no school-age children.

The question asked, and responses, are shown in the next Table:

"What was the biggest problem the Board of Education in your community had to deal with last year?"*

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Finances, millage problems | 37% | 40% | 36% |
| Discipline | 7 | 5 | 8 |
| Teacher negotiations, strikes | 7 | 8 | 7 |
| Closing a school | 5 | 11 | 3 |
| Administrators, supts. | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| Drugs in school | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| Violence in school | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| Bus transportation | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Curriculum problems | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| Extra-curricular activities | 1 | 2 | - |
| Miscellaneous | 4 | 6 | 3 |
| Can't Say | 34 | 25 | 39 |

*(Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses.)

AWARENESS OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION'S "BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION"

Only one out of every five persons interviewed (21%) said they had heard something about the State Board of Education's "Blueprint for Action" -- a series of recommendations to improve public education. The report was released by the State Board on January 11, 1984....four months before the statewide survey was conducted.

Those who had read or heard of the report got their information primarily from newspapers or television, according to responses to a follow-up question.

"Have you heard anything about the Michigan State Board of Education's "Blueprint for Action" -- recommendations to improve public education?"

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 21% | 22% | 20% |
| No | 78 | 78 | 79 |
| Can't Say | 1 | - | 2 |

"Where did you hear or read about this report?"

| | (21% of All Resp.) | (23% of Public Hslds.) | (20% of Not Pub. Sch. Hslds.) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Newspaper | 59% | 63% | 57% |
| Television | 24 | 17 | 27 |
| Word-of-mouth | 13 | 12 | 13 |
| School/district publication | 10 | 13 | 8 |
| School/community function | 8 | 13 | 5 |
| Radio | 8 | 3 | 10 |
| Magazine | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Miscellaneous sources | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Can't Say | 2 | 3 | 2 |

REACTION TO A LONGER SCHOOL DAY AND SCHOOL YEAR

Nine out of every ten respondents -- both those with students now enrolled in public schools and those with no school-age children, favor a six hour school day for junior high and high school students.

But opinions are mixed on the question of a longer school year, as proposed by the State Board of Education. The Board has recommended lengthening the school year from 180 days to 190 days for students and 200 days for teachers. Citizens with students in the schools are opposed, by a margin of 49% to 42%. However, the majority (53%) of citizens with no public school students favor such a plan, by a margin of 53% to 38%.

If the school year should be lengthened, the majority of survey respondents (56%) feel that state funding should be increased as a result of a longer school year.

Responses to these three questions are reflected in the following Tables.

| SIX HOUR SCHOOL DAY AT HIGH SCHOOL AND JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 91% | 90% | 91% |
| Favor if it does not cost money | 1 | - | 1 |
| Oppose | 6 | 8 | 5 |
| Can't Say | 3 | 2 | 3 |

| SCHOOL YEAR BEING LENGTHENED FROM 180 TO 190 DAYS FOR STUDENTS AND 200 DAYS FOR TEACHERS: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 49% | 42% | 53% |
| Favor if it does not cost money | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Oppose | 41 | 49 | 38 |
| Can't Say | 9 | 9 | 9 |

| STATF FUNDING SHOULD BE INCREASED AS A RESULT OF LENGTHENING SCHOOL YEAR: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 56% | 56% | 56% |
| Favor if it does not cost money | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Oppose | 36 | 37 | 35 |
| Can't Say | 6 | 5 | 7 |

CITIZENS REACTION TO PROPOSED GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Survey respondents strongly supported specific high school graduation requirements recommended by the State Board of Education. Data indicates that 93% favor 4 years of communication skills (including English), 89% favor one year of health physical education; 87% favor 2 years of math, including Algebra; 86% favor 2 years of science; 81% favor one-year of computer education; 80% favor 2 years or more in a combination of foreign language, fine/performing arts, or vocational education, and 74% favor requiring 3 years of social studies. In addition, 76% favor higher graduation requirements for students going on to college (3 years of both math and science and at least 2 years of a foreign language).

| 4 YEARS OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 93% | 93% | 93% |
| Oppose | 5 | 7 | 4 |
| Can't Say | 2 | - | 2 |

| 2 YEARS OF MATHEMATICS: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 87% | 83% | 89% |
| Oppose | 6 | 9 | 5 |
| Can't Say | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| More than 2 years | 5 | 8 | 4 |

| 2 YEARS OF SCIENCE: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 86% | 85% | 86% |
| Favor if no cost | 1 | - | 1 |
| Oppose | 11 | 15 | 9 |
| Can't Say | 3 | 1 | 4 |

| 3 YEARS OF SOCIAL STUDIES: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 74% | 74% | 74% |
| Favor if no cost | 1 | - | 1 |
| Oppose | 20 | 23 | 19 |
| Can't Say | 5 | 3 | 6 |

| 2 YEARS OR MORE IN ONE, OR A COMBINATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE, FINE/PERFORMING ARTS, OR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 80% | 79% | 81% |
| Oppose | 15 | 19 | 14 |
| Can't Say | 4 | 3 | 4 |

| ONE YEAR OF HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 89% | 91% | 88% |
| Oppose | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Can't Say | 2 | - | 2 |

| 1/2-YEAR OF COMPUTER EDUCATION: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 81% | 79% | 82% |
| Oppose | 7 | 9 | 6 |
| Can't Say | 2 | - | 3 |
| More than 1/2 year | 9 | 12 | 8 |

| STUDENTS WHO PLAN ON GOING TO COLLEGE SHOULD STUDY 3 YEARS OF MATH, 3 YEARS OF SCIENCE AND AT LEAST TWO YEARS OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 76% | 74% | 77% |
| Oppose | 19 | 23 | 16 |
| Can't Say | 5 | 3 | 6 |

## REACTION TO SUGGESTED USES OF COMPETENCY TESTS

Michigan citizens solidly endorse the concept of competency tests for high school students prior to graduation.

In response to survey questions on this subject, 95% favored requiring students to pass reading and mathematics competency tests in order to graduate from high school.

If, after repeated tries, a student can't pass such a competency test, two-thirds of those polled (67%) would favor granting that student a high school certificate of attendance, rather than a diploma.

Further, 81% favor such competency testing before students are promoted from junior high to high school, and/or from elementary school to middle school or junior high school.

There is, however, no solid preference for the origin of any such competency tests. One-third of those interviewed (35%) believe such competency tests should be given on a statewide basis. Nearly another third (31%) believe competency tests should be prepared on a national basis. Yet another 28% think competency tests should be prepared at the local school system level.

The questions and responses in this battery of questions is shown below:

"How do you feel about requiring students to pass reading and mathematics competency tests in order to graduate from high school? Would you favor or oppose that recommendation?"

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 95% | 92% | 97% |
| Oppose | 4 | 7 | 3 |
| Can't Say | 1 | 2 | 1 |

(If "FAVOR") "If a student, after repeated tries, can't pass a competency tests, would you favor or oppose granting that student a high school certificate of attendance, rather than a diploma?"

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 67% | 67% | 67% |
| Oppose | 25 | 24 | 25 |
| Can't Say | 8 | 8 | 8 |

"How about competency tests being used before a student is promoted from elementary school to Middle School/junior high, and from Middle School/junior high to high school. Do you favor or oppose that?"

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 81% | 77% | 83% |
| Only favor elementary competency test | - | - | 1 |
| Only favor middle school competency test | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Oppose | 13 | 18 | 11 |
| Can't Say | 4 | 3 | 4 |

"Some people also believe that since every community is different, tests given for promotion should be prepared for that school system only. Other people think the tests should be given on a statewide basis. Still others think that they should be prepared on a national basis to be given to students in the same grade throughout the nation. Which of these three ways would you prefer -- having tests prepared on a local, state, or national basis?"

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Statewide basis | 35% | 33% | 36% |
| National basis | 31 | 32 | 31 |
| Local basis | 28 | 32 | 26 |
| Combination of all 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Miscellaneous | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Can't Say | 3 | 1 | 5 |

WHAT CITIZENS THINK OF SIX OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOCAL DISTRICTS

Michigan citizens interviewed in the survey also favored, by a substantial majority in most cases, each of six other State Board of Education recommendations included in the "Blueprint":

* 96% agreed that all high school students should be provided with a complete list of subjects necessary for entry in various occupations;
* 87% favored the development and implementation of a 3 to 5-year School Improvement Plan, by every local school board;

* 85% agreed that every local school district should develop written student performance standards for report cards, promotion and graduation purposes;
* 75% favored development of individual student learning plans, for each student, by every local school district;
* 66% agreed with the recommendation that every local school district adopt uniform homework policies for students;
* 59% also favor development, by school districts, of foreign language programs in elementary (K-6) schools.

Responses to each of these six recommendations of the State Board of Education show few significant differences of opinion between citizens with public school students and those with no such students.

| EVERY LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD SHOULD DEVELOP AND ADOPT A 3 TO 5 YEAR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 87% | 92% | 85% |
| Favor if it does not cost money | 1 | - | 1 |
| Oppose | 5 | 5 | 6 |
| Can't Say | 7 | 3 | 9 |

| LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS SHOULD DEVELOP WRITTEN STUDENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR REPORT CARDS, PROMOTION, AND GRADUATION PURPOSES: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 85% | 85% | 86% |
| Oppose | 9 | 12 | 8 |
| Can't Say | 5 | 4 | 6 |

| EVERY LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SHOULD DEVELOP INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLANS FOR EACH STUDENT -- TO IDENTIFY AND MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF EACH STUDENT: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 75% | 77% | 74% |
| Favor if it does not cost money | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Oppose | 17 | 17 | 17 |
| Can't Say | 6 | 3 | 8 |

| EVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT SHOULD ADOPT UNIFORM HOMEWORK POLICIES, FOR STUDENTS: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 66% | 65% | 67% |
| Oppose | 28 | 31 | 26 |
| Can't Say | 6 | 4 | 7 |

| SCHOOL DISTRICTS SHOULD DEVELOP FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN ALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (K-6) SO STUDENTS CAN LEARN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 59% | 55% | 61% |
| Favor if it does not cost money | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Oppose | 36 | 43 | 33 |
| Can't Say | 4 | 2 | 5 |

## REACTIONS TO PROPOSALS TO INCREASE STATE FUNDING FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES

Survey respondents also echoed strong support for increased state funding for the establishment of teacher training/re-training centers in science, math, computer technology and communication skills.

Those polled also strongly endorsed an expansion of the state Educational Assessment Testing of students.

Seven out of every ten persons interviewed (71%) felt that state funding should be increased to be used for school districts with outstanding programs for gifted and talented students. And a majority of respondents (57%) favored state funding for local school districts to provide help and classes for pre-school age children.

| STATE FUNDING SHOULD BE PROVIDED SO TEACHER TRAINING CENTERS CAN BE ESTABLISHED TO RE-TRAIN TEACHERS/ ADMINISTRATORS IN SCIENCE, MATH, COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 67% | 72% | 65% |
| Favor if it does not cost money | 1 | - | 1 |
| Oppose | 28 | 26 | 30 |
| Can't Say | 4 | 2 | 5 |

| STATE FUNDS SHOULD BE INCREASED SO THE STATE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT TESTING OF STUDENTS IN READING AND MATH CAN BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE TESTING IN OTHER SUBJECTS, LIKE SCIENCE AND WRITING: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 74% | 75% | 74% |
| Favor if it does not cost money | 1 | - | 1 |
| Oppose | 20 | 22 | 20 |
| Can't Say | 4 | 3 | 5 |

| STATE FUNDING SHOULD BE GIVEN TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH OUTSTANDING PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENTS: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 71% | 71% | 71% |
| Favor if it does not cost money | 1 | - | 1 |
| Oppose | 22 | 24 | 22 |
| Can't Say | 6 | 5 | 7 |

| STATE FUNDING SHOULD BE PROVIDED SO SCHOOLS CAN PROVIDE SPECIAL HELP AND CLASSES FOR PRE-SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 57% | 58% | 57% |
| Favor if it does not cost money | 1 | - | 1 |
| Oppose | 37 | 37 | 37 |
| Can't Say | 5 | 5 | 6 |

## SUPPORT FOR A SYSTEM OF ACCREDITATION OF LOCAL SCHOOLS

Another of the recommendations of the State Board of Education dealt with development of a system for the accreditation, by the state, of Michigan's elementary and secondary schools.

This concept was soundly favored by three-fourths of the survey respondents. Both those with students enrolled in public schools and citizens with no school-age children endorsed such a proposal by nearly identical opinions.

| THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SHOULD DEVELOP A SYSTEM FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 76% | 77% | 76% |
| Oppose | 14 | 16 | 13 |
| Can't Say | 9 | 7 | 11 |

## REACTION TO A PROPOSAL TO CERTIFY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Nearly all respondents (91%) favored another recommendation from the "Blueprint for Action" -- one that calls for certification of school district superintendents and principals.

| SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, INCLUDING SUPERINTENDENTS AND PRINCIPALS, SHOULD BE CERTIFIED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, JUST LIKE TEACHERS ARE: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 91% | 91% | 91% |
| Favor if it does not cost money | - | - | - |
| Oppose | 6 | 7 | 6 |
| Can't Say | 3 | 2 | 3 |

## PUBLIC OPINIONS ABOUT TEACHER SALARIES AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION

In June of 1983, Project Outreach polled 400 Michigan adults to get reactions to the recommendations made by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. One area of questioning dealt with the recommendation of the Commission that salaries for teachers should be increased.

In their responses to the question in Michigan in June, 1983, 56% of those interviewed favored increases in pay for members of the teaching profession.

Almost the same margin of approval re-appeared again, in the 1984 Michigan Education Poll. In this survey, 54% favored increased teacher salaries "to attract top college students into the teaching profession." Citizens with students now enrolled in public schools were more supportive than were those with no school-age students.

| SCHOOL DISTRICTS SHOULD INCREASE TEACHER SALARIES TO ATTRACT TOP COLLEGE STUDENTS INTO THE TEACHING PROFESSION: | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor | 54% | 58% | 52% |
| Favor if it does not cost money | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Oppose | 35 | 31 | 38 |
| Can't Say | 7 | 8 | 7 |

In addition, the majority of those polled (55%) said they would like to have a child of theirs take up teaching as a profession. This support for the teaching profession in Michigan is significantly higher than Gallup pollsters discovered in 1983. In that annual nationwide survey, 45% said they would like to have a child of theirs take up teaching in the public schools as a career.

In the Michigan Education Poll, six out of every ten school parents (62%) expressed interest in having a child of theirs become a teacher. That compares with 52% who favored teaching as a career among respondents who have no school-age children.

Those who favored teaching as a career for their child said they felt teaching was a worthwhile profession for young people.

"Would you like to have a child of yours take up teaching in the public schools as a career?"

| | ('83 Gallup) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | (45%) | 55% | 62% | 52% |
| No | (33 ) | 33 | 29 | 36 |
| Can't Say | (22 ) | 11 | 9 | 13 |

(If "YES") "Why?"

| | (55% of All Resp.) | (62% of Pub. Sch. Hslds.) | (52% of Not Pub. Sch. Hslds.) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Worthwhile profession | 54% | 48% | 58% |
| Should be child's decision | 22 | 30 | 17 |
| Can make real difference in child's life | 18 | 17 | 18 |
| Contributes to society | 14 | 12 | 15 |
| Is a challenging job | 13 | 9 | 15 |
| Is a need for teachers | 5 | 6 | 5 |
| Good pay | 4 | 5 | 3 |
| Good hours | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| Miscellaneous | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| Can't Say | 5 | 5 | 5 |

(If "NO") "Why not?"

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Unrewarding, thankless work | 33% | 38% | 31% |
| Low pay | 29 | 39 | 25 |
| Discipline problems | 25 | 30 | 24 |
| Low prestige profession | 20 | 20 | 17 |
| Personal safety/dangerous | 14 | 12 | 15 |
| Not enough jobs open | 11 | 12 | 11 |
| High stress job | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Miscellaneous | 13 | 12 | 13 |
| Can't Say | 7 | 4 | 9 |

When respondents were asked in an "open" question about the personal qualities they would look for if they could choose their child's teacher, respondents said the most important quality was the ability to communicate,

to understand and relate to students. Forty-eight percent (48%) of the responses to the question centered on that characteristic of a teacher.

Another 31% of responses felt a good teacher cares about students, while 26% felt good teachers have the ability to discipline, to be firm yet fair. Further, 25% of those polled felt good teachers must have the ability to inspire and to motivate students.

Detailed responses to the "open" question are shown in the next Table.

"Suppose you could choose your child's teachers. Assuming they all had about the same experiences and training, what personal qualities would you look for?"*

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ability to communicate, understand, relate to students | 48% | 54% | 45% |
| Caring about students | 31 | 33 | 30 |
| Ability to discipline, to be firm and fair | 26 | 28 | 25 |
| Ability to inspire, motivate students | 25 | 26 | 24 |
| Patience | 18 | 20 | 17 |
| Intelligence | 16 | 16 | 16 |
| Friendliness, good personality, sense of humor | 16 | 19 | 14 |
| High moral character | 12 | 11 | 13 |
| Dedicated | 10 | 8 | 11 |
| Competent | 6 | 7 | 6 |
| Unbiased | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Neat, well-groomed | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Sincere | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Miscellaneous | 3 | 6 | 7 |
| Can't Say | 7 | 5 | 8 |

*(Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses.)

## OPINIONS ABOUT SCHOOL FUNDING, SPENDING PRACTICES

Survey respondents gave their local public schools a "good" or "fair" rating on the way the local district manages its money. Responses to this annual question are down slightly from those of the 1983 statewide survey.

This year, 37% rated school system money management as good or excellent, 33% assigned a "fair" rating, 16% a "poor" rating and 14% had no opinion.

The question asked and responses are shown on the following page.

"Generally, how would you rate the way the public schools in your community manage their money -- excellent, good, fair, or poor?"

| | ('83 State) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Excellent | ( 7%) | 6% | 8% | 6% |
| Good | (40 ) | 31 | 38 | 27 |
| Fair | (28 ) | 33 | 32 | 34 |
| Poor | (13 ) | 16 | 14 | 16 |
| Can't Say | (13 ) | 14 | 8 | 17 |

In the next few years, two-thirds of those polled (66%) said school spending should increase at the same rate as inflation. The percentage of those opinions is up significantly from responses of one year ago.

One out of every five citizens (22%) believe school spending should remain at the same level during the next few years, while 7% believe such spending should decrease.

There are significantly different opinions among citizens based on their ages. Nearly three-fourths of young adults (under age 35) believe that school spending in the next few years should increase at the same rate as inflation. Older adults do not embrace that opinion as readily. Only a slim majority of people over age 55 share that opinion, with three out of every 10 of those citizens saying that school budgets should remain at present levels.

"During the next few years, do you think that school spending should remain at the current level, increase at the same rate as inflation, or decrease?"

| | ('84 State) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Remain the same | (23%) | 22% | 19% | 24% |
| Increase | (57 ) | 66 | 74 | 62 |
| Decrease | (11 ) | 7 | 6 | 7 |
| Can't Say | (10 ) | 5 | 2 | 7 |

| | 18-24 Yrs. Old | 25-34 Yrs. Old | 35-54 Yrs. Old | 55-64 Yrs. Old | Over 65 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Remain the same | 16% | 19% | 21% | 30% | 29% |
| Increase | 71 | 73 | 68 | 55 | 54 |
| Decrease | 11 | 4 | 6 | 10 | 5 |
| Can't Say | 2 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 12 |

## WILLINGNESS TO PAY MORE TAXES TO IMPROVE EDUCATION QUALITY

Better than six out of every ten citizens (63%) said they would be willing to pay more taxes if it would raise the standard of education provided by the public schools in their community.

Again, there are significant differences of opinion on this issue based upon respondents' age levels. Young adults are very receptive to such a suggestion. Yet those over age 55 show much less support for increasing taxes for education. In fact, among those over age 65, respondents are evenly divided on the question -- 41% to 39%.

"Would you be willing to pay more taxes to help raise the standard of education provided by the public schools in your community?"

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 63% | 73% | 58% |
| No | 24 | 15 | 29 |
| Depends on amount | 9 | 10 | 9 |
| Can't Say | 3 | 2 | 4 |

| | 18-24 Yrs. Old | 25-34 Yrs. Old | 35-54 Yrs. Old | 55-64 Yrs. Old | Over 65 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 79% | 71% | 67% | 46% | 41% |
| No | 17 | 18 | 22 | 35 | 39 |
| Depends on amount | 2 | 10 | 10 | 15 | 10 |
| Can't Say | 2 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 10 |

## FAMILIARITY WITH THE HOMESTEAD PROPERTY TAX CREDIT

When it comes to paying property taxes, very few Michigan adults are familiar with the term "circuit breaker". Only about one out of every ten citizens (12%) understands that term is another way of describing the Michigan Property Tax Relief Program.

In fact, the majority (54%) are not even familiar with the Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit. Older adults are more knowledgeable about this form of relief than are younger citizens, as can be noted in the Tables that follow.

"When it comes to paying property taxes, are you familiar with the term 'circuit breaker'?"

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 12% | 15% | 10% |
| No | 87 | 83 | 90 |
| Can't Say | 1 | 2 | 1 |

"The term 'circuit breaker' means the Michigan Property Tax Relief program (Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit.) Are you familiar with how this works?"

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 44% | 47% | 42% |
| No | 54 | 51 | 56 |
| Can't Say | 2 | 2 | 2 |

| | 18-24 Yrs. Old | 25-34 Yrs. Old | 35-54 Yrs. Old | 55-64 Yrs. Old | Over 65 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 30% | 41% | 46% | 54% | 45% |
| No | 69 | 57 | 52 | 46 | 53 |
| Can't Say | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 |

## OPPOSITION, SUPPORT FOR DISTRICT ANNEXATION/CONSOLIDATION

In each of the three annual Michigan Education Polls, a pair of questions was asked regarding school district consolidation/annexation or remaining as a separate school district even if it meant paying more taxes.

In 1982, when the questions were first asked, 48% approved the consolidation idea, if their local district was in a serious financial situation. In 1983, that support grew to 56% of those interviewed. This year, support for the concept of district consolidation or annexation swelled to 64% of those polled.

In regards to the counter-proposal -- paying more taxes to remain a separate school district, about four out of every ten adults have consistently supported it. In the 1982 Michigan Education Poll, 44% said they would be willing to pay more taxes in order to remain a separate school district. In the 1983 statewide survey, that support slipped to 40%.

This year -- in 1984, 42% said they would be willing to pay more taxes to remain a separate school district, 41% would not, 7% said it depended on the amount of such a tax increase and 10% had no opinion.

"Many school districts in Michigan are having serious financial problems due to declining student enrollment. If this happened in your district, would you favor or oppose combining your district with a neighboring district, through consolidation or annexation?"

| | ('83 State) | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Favor combining | (56%) | 64% | 62% | 65% |
| Oppose | ( 2 ) | 27 | 32 | 25 |
| Depends on millage rate | (33 ) | 1 | 1 | - |
| Can't Say | ( 8 ) | 9 | 6 | 10 |

"Rather than have school district consolidation or annexation, would you favor or oppose keeping your district a separate school district, even if it meant voting for increased school millage?"

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Favor separate district | 42% | 49% | 39% |
| Oppose | 41 | 36 | 43 |
| Depends on amount of increase | 7 | 8 | 7 |
| Can't Say | 10 | 7 | 11 |

## COMPOSITION OF SURVEY SAMPLE
(95% Confidence; + 3.5%)

S = 800

### SEX OF RESPONDENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| Female | 56% |
| Male | 44 |

### HOUSEHOLDS WITH SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

| | |
|---|---|
| **Have school-age or younger, children | 45% |
| #No children of school age, or younger | 55 |

### # FORMER PUBLIC SCHOOL HOUSEHOLDS

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes, in last 3 years | 5% |
| No | 50 |

### **HOUSEHOLDS WITH SCHOOL-AGE, OR YOUNGER, CHILDREN

| | |
|---|---|
| Children in public schools | 32% |
| Children in private/parochial schools | 6 |
| Children in both public and non-public schools | 1 |
| Eldest child not of school age | 3 |
| Children not enrolled in school | 2 |

### PUBLIC SCHOOL HOUSEHOLDS

| | % OF PUB. SCH. HSLDS. | % OF ALL RESP. |
|---|---|---|
| Have elementary school students | 63% | 21% |
| Have junior high, middle school students | 34 | 11 |
| Have senior high school students | 46 | 15 |

## COMPOSITION OF SURVEY SAMPLE
(Continued)

### AGES OF RESPONDENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| 18-19 years old | 4% |
| 20-24 years old | 8 |
| 25-29 years old | 13 |
| 30-34 years old | 13 |
| 35-39 years old | 12 |
| 40-44 years old | 10 |
| 45-49 years old | 7 |
| 50-54 years old | 6 |
| 55-59 years old | 6 |
| 60-64 years old | 9 |
| 65 and over | 11 |

### EDUCATION LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| Grade school or less (Grade 1-8) | 4% |
| Some high school (Grades 9-12) | 10 |
| High school graduate | 38 |
| Vocational-technical school | 3 |
| Some college | 23 |
| College graduate | 15 |
| Post-graduate work | 8 |

### MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| Married | 61% |
| Single | 19 |
| Divorced, separated | 10 |
| Widow, widower | 8 |
| Declined to answer | 1 |

### TYPE OF COMMUNITY RESPONDENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| Detroit | 10% |
| Other large city | 17 |
| Suburban area | 26 |
| Small city/town | 24 |
| Village/rural area | 21 |
| Can't say | 1 |

## COMPOSITION OF SURVEY SAMPLE
(Continued)

### TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF RESPONDENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| Less than $10,000 | 10% |
| More than $10,000; less than $15,000 | 11 |
| More than $15,000; less than $25,000 | 19 |
| More than $25,000; less than $35,000 | 22 |
| More than $35,000 | 27 |
| Don't know | 2 |
| Declined to answer | 4 |

### RACE/ETHNIC STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| Black | 10% |
| Hispanic | 1 |
| Native American | 1 |
| White | 86 |
| Other | 1 |
| Declined to answer | 1 |

**Project Outreach**
of the Michigan State Board of Education
Michigan Department of Education
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, MI 48909

MI. ED. POLL
S = 800
(May 1-3, 1984)

VERSION 6 (1)

TIME INTERVIEW STARTED: _____

DISPOSITION LOG

| INTERVIEW # | PHONE # | ----Continue w/ number---- BUSY | NO ANSWER | CALL BACK DAY | CALL BACK TIME | BUS. INEL. | DC/DS/DISC. | REF'D/TERM'D | COMPLETE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | AM PM | | | | |
| | | | | | AM PM | | | | |
| | | | | | AM PM | | | | |
| | | | | | AM PM | | | | |
| | | | | | AM PM | | | | |
| | | | | | AM PM | | | | |

(2-5)

INTERVIEWER: _____ DATE OF INTERVIEW: _____

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW: 17 MIN. AVER. (6-7)

OPENING BY INTERVIEWER:

Hello, this is _____, calling for the Michigan State Board of Education.

We're calling a number of randomly selected citizens in the state to ask some questions about education.

This telephone number (REPEAT NUMBER) was randomly selected by computer. We don't know the name it is listed under. Is this a residence or a business? (IF A BUSINESS, THANKS AND TERMINATE.) (IF A RESIDENCE, CONTINUE).

To get a random sample, I need to ask two questions about the people living in your household.

How many adults 18 years of age or older live in this household? CIRCLE APPROPRIATE NUMBER →

How many of those 18 and over are men? CIRCLE APPROPRIATE NUMBER →

In your household, I should talk to the... (CIRCLE APPROPRIATE BOX.) Is he/she there?

| | 1 ADULT | 2 ADULTS | 3 ADULTS | 4 OR MORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 MEN | ADULT | YOUNGEST WOMAN | MIDDLE WOMAN | OLDEST WOMAN |
| 1 MAN | ADULT | WOMAN | OLDEST WOMAN | MIDDLE WOMAN |
| 2 MEN | | OLDEST MAN | WOMAN | YOUNGEST WOMAN |
| 3 MEN | | | MIDDLE MAN | MIDDLE MAN |
| 4 OR MORE | | | | OLDEST MAN |

(8)

(9)

WHEN SELECTED PERSON IS OTHER THAN YOUR INITIAL CONTACT SAY:

Hello, this is _____. I'm a volunteer calling for the Michigan Department of Education.

You may have heard about a public opinion survey we're doing to find out what residents think about their public schools.

All opinions you will give us will remain completely confidential. They will be summarized to give school officials a general picture of public opinion.

My questions will take about 15 minutes or so, depending on you. Is this a convenient time for you? (IF NOT, MAKE A CALL-BACK APPOINTMENT.)

IF PROPER RESPONDENT IS READY, START WITH #1. IF NOT, MAKE APPOINTMENT FOR A CALL-BACK.

1. Are there children of school age (K-12) or younger, in this household? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes (SKIP TO #3) | 45% |
| No | 55 |

2. (IF "NO" ON #1) Were there children enrolled in the local public schools from this household, within the last 3 years? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | % of All |
|---|---|
| Yes (SKIP TO #5) . . . 10% | 05% |
| No (SKIP TO #5) . . . 90 | 50 |

3. Do the children attend public schools, private, or parochial schools? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Local public schools (GO TO #4) | 32% |
| Private/parochial schools (SKIP TO #5) | 6 |
| Both (GO TO #4) | 1 |
| Neither; oldest child is pre-school age (SKIP TO #5) | 3 |
| Children not enrolled in school (SKIP TO #5) | 2 |

4. PUBLIC SCHOOL HOUSEHOLDS ONLY — Are the children in elementary school, middle school or junior high or senior high school? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

| | % of Q | % of All |
|---|---|---|
| Elementary | 63% | 21% |
| Junior high/middle school | 34 | 11 |
| Senior high school | 46 | 15 |
| Can't say | - | |

5. How much do you feel you know about the public schools in your community? Quite a lot, some, or very little? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Quite a lot | 30% |
| Some | 39 |
| Very little | 29 |
| Nothing | 2 |
| Can't say | |

6. Where do you get your information that you use to judge the quality of schools in your community? (PROBE:) Is there any other source of information you use? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Children; my children | 25% |
| Daily newspaper | 36 |
| Word-of-mouth of others | 42 |
| School employees | 15 |
| School district newsletter | 11 |
| School bldg. newsletters, notes | 8 |
| Parent-teacher conferences | 7 |
| Radio | 2 |
| TV | 7 |
| Direct observation, experience | 14 |
| Board members; meetings | 8 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) _____ | 3 |
| _____ | |
| None; no sources | 5 |
| Can't say | 3 |

Since last September, have you done any of these things connected with the schools?

| | | Yes | No | Can't Say |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | Received any newsletter, pamphlet, or any other material telling what the local public schools are doing? | 32% | 66% | 33% | 1 |
| 8. | Attended a local public school athletic event? | 25 | 35 | 65 | - |
| 9. | Attended a school play, concert or program in any local public school? | 24 | 38 | 62 | - |
| 10. | Met with any teachers or administrators in the local public school about your own child? | 21 | 31 | 68 | - |
| 11. | Attended a PTA/PTO meeting? | 14 | 13 | 86 | - |
| 12. | Attended any public meeting dealing with the local public school situation? | 8 | 17 | 83 | - |
| 13. | Helped out in a public school as a volunteer? | - | 20 | 80 | - |
| 14. | Attended a school board meeting? | 8 | 11 | 89 | - |
| 15. | Written any letter to the school board, newspaper, or any other organization about the local school situation? | 4 | 5 | 94 | - |

None of above 43%
D/K 4

16. Since last September, have you been in a local public school, when it was in session and students were in classes?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 40% |
| No | 60 |
| Can't say | - |

17. Was the school building fairly neat, clean and well-maintained?

| | % of Q |
|---|---|
| Yes | 93 |
| No | 5 |
| Can't say | 1 |

18. During the past few years, would you say that the local public schools in your community have been getting <u>better</u> in quality, getting <u>worse</u>, or staying <u>about the same</u>? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Getting better | 23% |
| Worse | 16 |
| Some ways better, other ways worse | 7 |
| About the same | 40 |
| Can't say | 14 |

19. (IF "WORSE") Why do you feel that way? (n = 128) 16%

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <u>Students aren't well prepared</u> | 22% | Poor local, state $ support | 15% |
| Discipline problems | 21% | Schls. have negative reputation | 11 |
| <u>School programs reduced</u> | 18% | Violence in schools | 6 |
| Quality of pgm. declining | 17% | Poor Administration | 5 |
| <u>Miscellaneous</u> | 4 | Don't teach basics | 3 |
| Can't say | 2 | Too many fields | 1 |
| | | Poor $ management | 2 |

20. Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D or E to describe the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools in your community were "graded" in the same way. <u>What grade</u> would you give your local public school system -- A, B, C, D or E?

| | |
|---|---|
| A | 8% |
| B | 41 |
| C | 29 |
| D | 6 |
| E | 2 |
| Can't say | 13 |

21. What are the things you like about the public schools in your community? (PROBE:) Anything else? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT MARK ANY RESPONDENT GIVES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Good teachers | 23% |
| Good school facilities, resources | 8 |
| Curriculum, range of subjects offered | 21 |
| Special services, programs provided students | 10 |
| Individual attention given students | 9 |
| Sports, athletics | 13 |
| Other extra-curricular activities | 11 |
| Schools close to home | 6 |
| Good administrators | 6 |
| Size, smallness of school, district | 5 |
| Parent/community involvement & relationships | 13 |
| Discipline/student behavior | 6 |
| Good student transportation | 1 |
| Nothing | 7 |
| Everything | 3 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) _____ | |
| Can't say | 24 |

22. What don't you like about your local public schools? (PROBE:) Anything else? (DO NOT READ LIST BUT MARK ANY ANSWERS RESPONDENT GIVES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Student attitudes, behavior in school | 5% |
| Schools' poor discipline | 12 |
| Some teachers | 13 |
| Weakness in curriculum | 13 |
| Lack of "3 R's" -- basic skills | 7 |
| Bus transportation concerns | 3 |
| Principals; other administrators | 4 |
| Board of education policies | 4 |
| Poor $ management; waste | 6 |
| Salaries are too high | 1 |
| School closing; boundary changes | 2 |
| School taxes too high | 4 |
| Financial, program cutbacks | 7 |
| Nothing | 20 |
| Everything | 2 |
| Can't say | 21 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) | |
| Miscellaneous | 5 |
| Too much emphasis on sports | 2 |
| Substance Abuse | 2 |
| Violence | 2 |
| Poor facilities | 2 |
| Poor communication | 2 |
| Overcrowded schools | 3 |

23. What was the biggest problem the Board of Education in your community had to deal with last year? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT MARK ANY THAT RESPONDENT GIVES.) (PROBE:) Anything else?

| | |
|---|---|
| Finances, millage problems | 37% |
| Teacher negotiations, strikes | 7 |
| Bus transportation | 2 |
| School extra-curricular activities | 1 |
| Closing a school -- changing school boundaries | 5 |
| Discipline | 7 |
| School administrators, superintendents | 4 |
| Curriculum problems | 2 |
| Drugs in school | 3 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) _____ | 4 |
| Can't say | 34 |

24. Have you heard anything about the Michigan State Board of Education's "Blueprint for Action" -- recommendations to improve public eduation?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes (GO TO #25) | 21% |
| No (SKIP TO #26) | 78 |
| Can't say (SKIP TO #26) | 1 |

25. Where did you hear or read about this report? (PROBE:) Anywhere else? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT CIRCLE ALL THAT RESPONDENT GIVES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Newspaper | 59% |
| TV | 24 |
| Radio | 8 |
| School, district publication | 10 |
| Word of mouth | 13 |
| Magazine | 1 |
| School/community function | 8 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) _____ | 2 |
| Can't recall | 2 |

Earlier this year, the State Board of Education approved a long-range plan for improving education in Michigan. It's called "A Blueprint for Action". Tell me if you favor or oppose each of these recommendations.

| | Favor | Favor if Does not Cost Money | Oppose | Can't Say |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 26. Every high school and junior high/middle school should have a school day of at least six hours of instruction. | 91% | 1 | 6 | 3 |
| 27. The school year should be lengthened from 180 days to 190 days for students and 200 days for teachers. | 49 | 1 | 41 | 9 |
| 28. State funding for local schools should be increased as a condition of lengthening the school year? | 56 | 2 | 36 | 6 |

How do you feel about these state recommended high school graduation requirements? Do you favor or oppose....

| | Favor | Favor if Does not Cost Money | Oppose | Can't Say | 2 + Yrs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | 58 |
| | | | | | 42 |
| 29. 4 years of communication skills (reading, grammar, literature, writing, and English). | 93% | - | 5 | 2 | |
| 30. 2 years of mathematics (including algebra). | 87 | - | 6 | 2 | 5% |
| 31. 2 years of science (including both biological and physical science). | 86 | - | 11 | 3 | |
| 32. 3 years of social studies. | 74 | - | 20 | 5 | |
| 33. 2 years or more in one, or a combination of, foreign language, fine/performing arts, or vocational education. | 80 | - | 15 | 4 | |

| | | Favor | Favor if Does not Cost Money | Oppose | Can't Say | More than ½ Yr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 34. | One year of health/physical education. | 89% | - | 9 | 2 | |
| 35. | 1/2-year of computer education | 81 | - | 7 | 2 | 9 |
| 36. | Students who plan on going to college should study 3 years of math, 3 years of science and at least two years of a foreign language. | 76 | - | 19 | 5 | |

Do you favor or oppose these next recommendations of the State Board of Education?

| | | Favor | Favor if Does not Cost Money | Oppose | Can't Say |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 37. | Every local school board should develop and adopt a 3 to 5 year school Improvement Plan. | 87 | - | 5 | 7 |
| 38. | Local school boards should develop written student performance standards for report cards, promotion, and graduation purposes. | 85 | - | 9 | 5 |
| 39. | Every local school district should develop individual learning plans for each student -- to identify and meet the educational needs of each student. | 75 | 2 | 17 | 6 |
| 40. | Every school district should adopt uniform homework policies, for students. | 66 | - | 28 | 6 |
| 41. | All high school students should be provided with a complete list of subjects necessary for entry in various occupations. | 96 | - | 2 | 2 |

| | Favor | Favor if Does not Cost Money | Oppose | Can't Say |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 42. School districts should develop foreign language programs in all elementary schools (K-6) so students can learn a foreign language. | 59% | 1 | 36 | 4 |
| 43. School districts should increase teacher salaries to attract top college students into the teaching profession. | 54 | 3 | 35 | 7 |
| 44. School administrators, including superintendents and principals, should be certified by the State Board of Education, just like teachers are. | 91 | - | 6 | 3 |
| 45. State funding should be given to school districts with outstanding programs for gifted/talented students. | 71 | 1 | 22 | 6 |
| 46. State funding should be provided so schools can provide special help and classes for pre-school-age children. | 57 | 1 | 37 | 5 |
| 47. State funding should be provided so Teacher Training Centers can be established to re-train teachers/administrators in science, math, communication skills and computer technology. | 67 | 1 | 28 | 4 |
| 48. State funds should be increased so the State Educational Assessment testing of students in reading and math can be expanded to include testing in other subjects, like science and writing. | 74 | 1 | 20 | 4 |
| 49. The State Board of Education should develop a system for the Accreditation of elementary and secondary schools. | 76 | - | 14 | 9 |

50. How do you feel about requiring students to pass reading and mathematics competency tests in order to graduate from high school? Would you favor or oppose that recommendation?

| | |
|---|---|
| Favor | 95% |
| Oppose (SKIP TO #52) | 4 |
| Can't say (SKIP TO #52) | 1 |

51. (IF "FAVOR" ON #50) If a student, after repeated tries, can't pass a competency test, would you favor or oppose granting that student a high school certificate of attendance, rather than a diploma?

| | |
|---|---|
| Favor | 67% |
| Oppose | 25 |
| Can't say | 8 |

52. How about competency tests being used before a student is promoted from elementary school to Middle School/junior high, and from Middle School/junior high to high school. Do you favor or oppose that? (ONE ANSWER ONLY)

| | |
|---|---|
| Favor | 81% |
| Only favor elementary comp. test | - |
| Only favor middle school comp. test | 1 |
| Oppose | 13 |
| Can't say | 4 |

53. Some people also believe that since every community is different, tests given for promotion should be prepared for that school system only. Other people think the tests should be given on a statewide basis. Still others think that they should be prepared on a national basis to be given to students in the same grade throughout the nation. Which of these three ways would you prefer -- having tests prepared on a local, state, or national basis?

| | |
|---|---|
| Local basis | 28% |
| Statewide basis | 35 |
| National basis | 31 |
| Combination of all 3 | 1 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) _____ | |
| _____ | 1 |
| Can't say | 3 |

54. Let me change the subject. (PAUSE) Would you like to have a child of yours take up <u>teaching</u> in the public schools as a career? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | | Gallup |
|---|---|---|
| Yes (GO TO #55) | 55% | 45% |
| No (SKIP TO #56) | 33 | 33 |
| Can't say (SKIP TO #57) | 11 | 22 |

55. (IF "YES" ON #54) Why? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT MARK ANY THAT RESPONDENT GIVES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Is a worthwhile profession | 54% |
| Contributes to society | 14 |
| Is a challenging job | 13 |
| Can make a real difference in a child's life | 18 |
| Should be the child's decision, tho | 22 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) | |
| There is a need for teachers | 5 |
| Good pay | 4 |
| Good hours | 2 |
| Misc. 3% | |
| Can't say 5% | |

56. (IF "NO" ON #54) Why not? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT MARK ANY THAT RESPONDENT GIVES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Low pay | 29% |
| Discipline problems | 25 |
| Personal safety/dangerous | 14 |
| Unrewarding, thankless work | 33 |
| Low prestige as a profession | 20 |
| Not enough jobs open | 11 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) | |
| High stress job | 4 |
| Misc. | 13 |
| Can't say | 7 |

57. Suppose you could choose your child's teachers. Assuming they all had about the same experiences and training, what <u>personal qualities</u> would you look for? (PROBE:) Anything else? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT MARK ANY THAT RESPONDENT GIVES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Ability to communicate, understand, to relate to students | 48% |
| Patience | 18 |
| Ability to discipline, be firm/fair | 26 |
| High moral character | 12 |
| Friendliness, good personality, sense of humor | 16 |
| Ability to inspire, motivate students | 25 |
| Intelligence | 16 |
| Caring about students | 31 |
| Competent | 6 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) Dedicated | 10 |
| Sincere 1% Neatness 2% | |
| Unbiased 3 Misc. 3 | |
| Can't say | 7 |

58. Generally, how would you rate the way the public schools in your community manage their money -- excellent, good, fair, or poor? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Excellent | 6% |
| Good | 31 |
| Fair | 33 |
| Poor | 16 |
| Can't say | 14 |

59. During the next few years, do you think that school spending should remain at the current level, increase at the same rate as inflation, or decrease? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Remain the same | 22% |
| Increase | 66 |
| Decrease | 7 |
| Can't say | 5 |

60. Would you be willing to pay more taxes to help raise the standard of education provided by the public schools in your community?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 63% |
| No | 24 |
| Depends on how much | 9 |
| Can't say | 3 |

61. Many school districts in Michigan are having serious financial problems due to declining student enrollment. If this happened in your district, would you favor or oppose combining your district with a neighboring district, through consolidation or annexation? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Favor combining | 64% |
| Oppose | 27 |
| Depends on millage rate | - |
| Can't say | 9 |

62. Rather than have school district consolidation or annexation, would you favor or oppose keeping your district a separate school district, even if it meant voting for increased school millage? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Favor separate district | 42% |
| Oppose | 41 |
| Depends on amount of increase | 7 |
| Can't say | 10 |

63. When it comes to paying property taxes, are you familiar with the term "circuit breaker"?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 12% |
| No | 87 |
| Can't say | 1 |

64. (While it may not be generally known) (As you know) The term "circuit breaker" means the Michigan Property Tax Relief program (Homestead Property Tax Credit). Are you familiar with how this works.

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 44% |
| No | 54 |
| Can't say | 2 |

These last questions are just to help us classify the opinions of the people we are interviewing.

65. Would you mind telling me the year in which you were born? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Prior to 1918 (Over 65) | 11% |
| 1919 through 1923 (60-64) | 9 |
| 1924 through 1928 (55-59) | 6 |
| 1929 through 1933 (50-54) | 6 |
| 1934 through 1938 (45-49) | 7 |
| 1939 through 1943 (40-44) | 10 |
| 1944 through 1948 (35-39) | 12 |
| 1949 through 1953 (30-34) | 13 |
| 1954 through 1958 (25-29) | 13 |
| 1959 through 1963 (20-24) | 8 |
| 1964 through 1965 (18-19) | 4 |
| Declined to answer | - |

66. What is the last grade in school you had the opportunity to complete? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Grade school or less (grades 1-8) | 4% |
| Some high school | 10 |
| High school graduate (grades 9-12) | 38 |
| Vocational/technical school | 3 |
| Some college | 23 |
| College graduate | 15 |
| Post graduate study | 8 |
| Don't know | - |
| Declined to answer | - |

67. Which of the following income groups included your <u>total family income</u> last year? (READ INCOME GROUPS. CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Less than $10,000. . . . . | 14% |
| More than $10,000, but less than $15,000 . . . | 11 |
| More than $15,000, but less than $25,000 . . . | 19 |
| More than $25,000, but less than $35,000 . . . | 22 |
| More than $35,000. . . . . | 27 |
| Don't know . . . . . | 2 |
| Declined to answer . . . . . | 4 |

68. Would you mind telling me -- are you white, black, Hispanic, or of some other ethnic group? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Black. . . . . | 10% |
| Hispanic . . . . . | 1 |
| Native American (American Indian). . . . . | 1 |
| White. . . . . | 86 |
| Other. . . . . | 1 |
| Declined to answer . . . . . | 1 |

69. In what type of community do you live -- large city, suburban area, small city or town, a village, or rural area? (GET NAME OF COMMUNITY.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Detroit: _____ | 10% |
| Other city (SPECIFY:) _____ | 17 |
| Suburban area (SPECIFY:) _____ | 26 |
| Small city/town (SPECIFY:) _____ | 24 |
| Village-Rural area (SPECIFY): _____ | 21 |
| Can't say. . . . . | 1 |

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO GIVE ME YOUR OPINIONS.

#

(DO NOT ASK. RECORD AT END OF INTERVIEW.)

70. SEX OF RESPONDENT:

| | |
|---|---|
| Female . . . . . | 56% |
| Male . . . . . | 44 |

INTERVIEWER'S NAME: _____

COMMENTS: _____

_____

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TIME INTERVIEW ENDED: _____

# A Summary
# OPINIONS OF MICHIGAN CITIZENS ABOUT THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

An Overview of Findings from the
3rd Annual Michigan Education
Public Opinion Survey
of a
Cross-section of 800 Adults:
Interviewed by Telephone, May 1-3, 1984

Conducted by

Project Outreach

SP 025 730

When asked to rate the quality of the public schools in their community, almost one-half of Michigan's adults (49%) gave their local public schools an A or B rating.

That overall assessment is slightly higher than data shown in the 1983 Michigan Education Poll, but is significantly higher than the A and B ratings of 32% recorded by Gallup pollsters in the nationwide 1983 Gallup Poll on Attitudes Toward the Public Schools.

Michigan ratings were obtained in a state-wide public opinion survey of 800 Michigan adults -- the 3rd Annual Michigan Education Poll, conducted by the Michigan State Board of Education. The poll was conducted from May 1-3, 1984, by in-depth telephone interviews in a probability sampling of the state's telephone households. The poll was under the direction of Ned S. Hubbell, director of the State Board's Project Outreach.

In this years Michigan "report card" rating, 8% gave the public schools an A rating, 41% a B rating, 29% a C, 6% a D, and 2% an E rating. Another 13% were unable to give the schools a performance rating.

As was noted in each of the first two state-wide education polls, citizens with public school students in their household gave significantly higher ratings to public schools than did those citizens with no public school students. This year, 62% of the responding public school households awarded an A, or B, rating, up 6% over one year ago.

In fact, report card ratings of the public for Michigan's public schools have been rising over the past three years. This is in marked contrast to ratings which have been dropping as recorded each year in recent annual Gallup polls on education.

The Gallup question, asked again in Michigan:

"Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, or E to describe the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools in your community were graded in the same way. What grade would you give your local public school system -- A, B, C, D, or E?"

Michigan findings are shown as compared with the recent Gallup study:

| | All Resp. | Pub. Sch. Hslds. | Not Pub. Sch. Hslds. | ('83 State) | ('82 State) | ('83 Gallup) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | 8% | 11% | 7% | 8% | 9% | 6% |
| B | 41 | 51 | 35 | 38 | 33 | 25 |
| C | 29 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 35 | 32 |
| D | 6 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 13 |
| E | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| Can't say | 13 | 1 | 19 | 12 | 10 | 17 |

Four out of every 10 citizens (40%) feel their local public schools have been getting neither better or worse in recent years, but that the quality of the schools has remained about the same. In response to a question seeking this opinion, 23% of those interviewed felt the schools were getting better in quality, 16% said the schools are getting worse, 7% said schools are better in some ways but worse in others, and 40% said school quality was about the same during the past few years.

The biggest problem confronting local school boards is balancing the school system's budget. Financial, budget problems were named by survey respondents (37%) as the major problem of their local board of education. That is the third straight year finances was cited as the district's biggest problem. Last year, 43% cited finances as the local school district's biggest problem.

One out of every five persons interviewed (21%) said they had heard something about the State Board of Education's "Blueprint for Action" -- the recommendations to improve public education. That level of awareness was reported by those polled since release of the recommendations by the State Board on January 11, 1984.

Survey respondents were asked a battery of specific questions seeking citizen support or opposition to each of "Blueprint" recommendations. Data reveals:

* 91% favor a high school/junior high instructional day of at least 6 hours;
* 49% favor a school year of 190 days for students; 200 days for teachers (41% opposed);
* 56% favor an increase in state funding for local schools as a condition of lengthening the school year;
* 95% favor requiring students to pass reading and mathematics tests in order to graduate from high school; if -- after repeated tries, a student can't pass such a competency test, 67% would favor granting of a certificate of attendance, rather than a diploma;
* 81% favor such competency testing before students are promoted from junior high to high school, and/or elementary school to junior high;
* One-third (35%) believe such competency tests should be prepared by the state; 31% would prefer use of a national test, while 28% would prefer the local school district prepare the test.

In response to specific high school graduation requirements recommended by the State Board of Education -- 93% favor 4 years of communication skills (including English), 89% favor one year of health physical education; 87% favor 2 years of math, including Algebra; 86% favor 2 years of science; 81% favor one-half year of computer education; 80% favor 2 years or more in a combination of foreign language, fine/performing arts, or vocational education, and 74% favor requiring 3 years of social studies. In addition, 76% favor higher graduation requirements for students going on to college (3 years of both math and science and at least 2 years of a foreign language).

Michigan citizens interviewed in the survey also favored, by a substantial majority in most cases, each of six other State Board of Education recommendations included in the "Blueprint":

* 96% agreed that all high school students should be provided with a complete list of subjects necessary for entry in various occupations;
* 87% favored the development and implementation of a 3 to 5-year School Improvement Plan, by every local school board;
* 85% agreed that every local school district should develop written student performance standards for report cards, promotion and graduation purposes;
* 75% favored development of individual student learning plans, for each student, by every local school district;
* 66% agreed with the recommendation that every local school district adopt uniform homework policies for students;
* 59% also favor development, by school districts, of foreign language programs in elementary (K-6) schools.

In addition, three-fourths of those polled (76%) favor the development by the State Board of Education of a system of Accreditation of elementary and secondary schools.

State funding should be provided, respondents' said, for these purposes:

* To expand the state Educational Assessment testing of students now in reading and math but also in other subjects, like science and writing (74% favor; 20% oppose);
* For school districts with outstanding programs for gifted/talented students (71% favor; 22% oppose);
* Establish Teacher Training Centers to re-train teachers/administrators in science, math, communication skills and computer technology (67% favor; 28% oppose);
* To enable schools to provide special help and classes for pre-school-age children (57% favor; 37% oppose).

A slim majority of survey respondents (54%) also favor the State Board's recommendation that local school districts increase teacher salaries to attract top college students into the teaching profession (54% favor; 35% oppose). The majority of those polled (55%) said they would like to have their child take up teaching as a profession. This support for the teaching profession in Michigan is significantly higher than Gallup pollsters discovered from 45% of those polled in the 1983 nationwide education survey.

In the next few years, two-thirds of those polled (66%) said school spending should increase at the same rate as inflation. That compares with 57% who expressed the same opinion in the 1983 Michigan Education Poll. Another 22% said such spending should remain at the current level while 7% feel it should decrease.

When asked to rate the way the public schools in their community spend the funds available to them, 37% gave the schools an "excellent" or "good" rating, 33% a "fair" rating, and 16% a "poor" rating in this regard. Another 14% were unable to give an opinion.

Yet, when asked about willingness to pay more taxes to raise the standard of local school education, 63% said they would be willing to pay more taxes for that purpose. The question was stated in this manner:

> "Would you be willing to pay more taxes to help raise the standard of education provided by the public schools in your community?"

In response, 63% said yes, 9% said it depended on the amount of local taxes necessary to do that, 24% said no, and 3% had no opinion.

In each of the first three annual Michigan Education Polls, a pair of questions was asked about school district consolidation/annexation as opposed to paying more taxes to remain a separate school district. In 1982, when the questions were first asked, 48% approved consolidation if their local district was in serious financial condition. In 1983, that support grew to 56% of those polled. In this 1984 poll, support for consolidation/annexation was voiced by 64% of those interviewed.

In the 1982 Michigan Education Poll, 44% said they would be willing to pay more taxes to remain a separate school district. In 1983, that percentage slipped to 40%. This year, 42% would be willing to pay more taxes to remain a separate school district, 41% would not, while 7% said it depended on the amount of such a tax increase and 10% had no opinion.

When asked if they were familiar with the term, "Circuit Breaker" when it came to paying property taxes, 12% said yes, 87% said no. When explained that "Circuit Breaker" was another name for Michigan's property tax relief program or Homestead Property Tax Credit, 44% said they were familiar with that term (but 54% were not).

In other areas of survey questionning, the typical Michigan adult is fairly well informed about the public schools in Michigan. Thirty (30%) percent said they knew quite a lot about the schools, compared with 22% who said that in the 1983 Gallup Poll. In this Michigan opinion survey, another 39% said the same things about the local schools, compared with 42% at the national level. Yet, one-third of Michigan's adults (31%) said they knew very little or nothing about the local schools. The latter opinion was given by 40% of those with no children in their household, compared to 11% of those with such students in their home.

Two-thirds of those polled (66%) said that since last September they had received a letter, pamphlet or other printed material telling what the local public schools were doing. Another 40% said they had been in a local public school since last September, when the school was in session and students were in classes. Further, 38% said they attended a school play, concert or program in a local public school this school year, 35% said they have attended a local school athletic event, and 31% have met with a teacher or school administrator about their own child this school year. Poll data also indicated that one out of every five adults (20%) this year has helped out in some way as a local school volunteer.

The typical Michigan citizen also both praises and criticizes the public schools in his/her community. Respondents praised, and in this order, good teachers (23%), the curriculum (21%), sports, athletics (13%), parent-school involvement, communication (13%), and extra-curricular activities for students (11%). At the same time, 13% of those polled were critical of some teachers, some weaknesses in the school curriculum (13%) and poor discipline (12%).

* * *

This statewide survey, the third in an annual poll of citizen opinions and attitudes toward the public schools, is intended to provide state school board members, legislators, and school officials at the local level, with such perceptions toward the schools. In addition, the state-wide data is gathered to provide benchmark comparative data for all intermediate and local school districts that are polling with some of the same questions.

The 3rd Annual Michigan Education Poll sample was drawn by a random digit dialing technique (RDD) on a proportionate sample, based upon density of population. Average telephone interview length was 17 minutes. Sample size of 800 respondents was based upon a 95% confidence that sampling error does not exceed 3.5%

(A complete copy of the full survey report is available by calling Project Outreach, 517/373-4631.)

#

**Project Outreach**
of the Michigan State Board of Education
Michigan Department of Education
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, MI 48909

MI. ED. POLL
S = 800
(May 1-3, 1984)

VERSION 6 (1)

TIME INTERVIEW STARTED: ____

DISPOSITION LOG

(2-5)

| INTER-VIEW # | PHONE # | BUSY (Continue on number) | NO ANSWER (Continue on number) | CALL BACK DAY | CALL BACK TIME | BUS. INEL. (Bump) | UL/OS/ DISC. (Bump) | REF'D/ TERM'D (Bump) | COM-PLETE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | AM PM | | | | |
| | | | | | AM PM | | | | |
| | | | | | AM PM | | | | |
| | | | | | AM PM | | | | |
| | | | | | AM PM | | | | |
| | | | | | AM PM | | | | |

INTERVIEWER: _____

DATE OF INTERVIEW: _____

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW: 17 MIN. AVER. (6-7)

OPENING BY INTERVIEWER:

Hello, this is _____, calling for the Michigan State Board of Education.

We're calling a number of randomly selected citizens in the state to ask some questions about education.

This telephone number (REPEAT NUMBER) was randomly selected by computer. We don't know the name it is listed under. Is this a residence or a business? (IF A BUSINESS, THANKS AND TERMINATE.) (IF A RESIDENCE, CONTINUE).

To get a random sample, I need to ask two questions about the people living in your household.

How many adults 18 years of age or older live in this household? CIRCLE APPROPRIATE NUMBER →

How many of those 18 and over are men? → CIRCLE APPROPRIATE NUMBER

In your household, I should talk to the... (CIRCLE APPROPRIATE BOX.) Is he/she there?

| | 1 ADULT | 2 ADULTS | 3 ADULTS | 4 OR MORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 MEN | ADULT | YOUNGEST WOMAN | MIDDLE WOMAN | 2ND OLDEST WOMAN |
| 1 MAN | ADULT | WOMAN | OLDEST WOMAN | MIDDLE WOMAN |
| 2 MEN | | OLDEST MAN | WOMAN | YOUNGEST OR OLDEST WOMAN |
| 3 MEN | | | MIDDLE MAN | MIDDLE MAN |
| 4 OR MORE | | | | 2ND OLDEST MAN |

(8)

(9)

WHEN SELECTED PERSON IS OTHER THAN YOUR INITIAL CONTACT SAY:

Hello, this is _____. I'm a volunteer calling for the Michigan Department of Education.

You may have heard about a public opinion survey we're doing to find out what residents think about their public schools.

All opinions you will give us will remain completely confidential. They will be summarized to give school officials a general picture of public opinion.

My questions will take about 15 minutes or so, depending on you. Is this a convenient time for you? (IF NOT, MAKE A CALL-BACK APPOINTMENT.)

IF PROPER RESPONDENT IS READY, START WITH #1. IF NOT, MAKE APPOINTMENT FOR A CALL-BACK.

1. Are there children of school age (K-12) or younger, in this household? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes (SKIP TO #3) | 45% |
| No | 55 |

2. (IF "NO" ON #1) Were there children enrolled in the local public schools from this household, within the last 3 years? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | | % of All |
|---|---|---|
| Yes (SKIP TO #5) | 10% | 05% |
| No (SKIP TO #5) | 90 | 50 |

3. Do the children attend public schools, private, or parochial schools? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Local public schools (GO TO #4) | 32% |
| Private/parochial schools (SKIP TO #5) | 6 |
| Both (GO TO #4) | 1 |
| Neither; oldest child is pre-school age (SKIP TO #5) | 3 |
| Children not enrolled in school (SKIP TO #5) | 2 |

4. PUBLIC SCHOOL HOUSEHOLDS ONLY — Are the children in elementary school, middle school or junior high or senior high school? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

| | % of Q | % of All |
|---|---|---|
| Elementary | 63% | 21% |
| Junior high/middle school | 34 | 11 |
| Senior high school | 46 | 15 |
| Can't say | - | |

5. How much do you feel you know about the public schools in your community? Quite a lot, some, or very little? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Quite a lot | 30% |
| Some | 39 |
| Very little | 29 |
| Nothing | 2 |
| Can't say | |

6. Where do you get your information that you use to judge the quality of schools in your community? (PROBE:) Is there any other source of information you use? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Children; my children | 25% |
| Daily newspaper | 36 |
| Word-of-mouth of others | 42 |
| School employees | 15 |
| School district newsletter | 11 |
| School bldg. newsletters, notes | 8 |
| Parent-teacher conferences | 7 |
| Radio | 2 |
| TV | 7 |
| Direct observation, experience | 14 |
| Board members; meetings | 8 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) _____ | 3 |
| None; no sources | 5 |
| Can't say | 3 |

Since last September, have you done any of these things connected with the schools?

| | | Yes | No | Can't Say |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | Received any newsletter, pamphlet, or any other material telling what the local public schools are doing? | 32% | 66% | 33% | 1 |
| 8. | Attended a local public school athletic event? | 25 | 35 | 65 | - |
| 9. | Attended a school play, concert or program in any local public school? | 24 | 38 | 62 | - |
| 10. | Met with any teachers or administrators in the local public school about your own child? | 21 | 31 | 68 | - |
| 11. | Attended a PTA/PTO meeting? | 14 | 13 | 86 | - |
| 12. | Attended any public meeting dealing with the local public school situation? | 8 | 17 | 83 | - |
| 13. | Helped out in a public school as a volunteer? | - | 20 | 80 | - |
| 14. | Attended a school board meeting? | 8 | 11 | 89 | - |
| 15. | Written any letter to the school board, newspaper, or any other organization about the local school situation? | 4 | 5 | 94 | - |

None of above 43%
D/K 4

16. Since last September, have you been in a local public school, when it was in session and students were in classes?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 40% |
| No | 60 |
| Can't say | - |

17. Was the school building fairly neat, clean and well-maintained?

| | % of Q |
|---|---|
| Yes | 93 |
| No | 5 |
| Can't say | 1 |

18. During the past few years, would you say that the local public schools in your community have been getting better in quality, getting worse, or staying about the same? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Getting better | 23% |
| Worse | 16 |
| Some ways better, other ways worse | 7 |
| About the same | 40 |
| Can't say | 14 |

19. (IF "WORSE") Why do you feel that way? (n = 128) 16%

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Students aren't well prepared | 22% | Poor local, state $ support | 15% |
| Discipline problems | 21% | Schls. have negative reputation | 11 |
| School programs reduced | 18% | Violence in schools | 6 |
| Quality of pgm. declining | 17% | Poor Administration | 5 |
| Miscellaneous | 4 | Don't teach basics | 3 |
| Can't say | 2 | Too many fields | 1 |
| | | Poor $ management | 2 |

20. Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D or E to describe the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools in your community were "graded" in the same way. What grade would you give your local public school system -- A, B, C, D or E?

| | |
|---|---|
| A | 8% |
| B | 41 |
| C | 29 |
| D | 6 |
| E | 2 |
| Can't say | 13 |

21. What are the things you like about the public schools in your community? (PROBE:) Anything else? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT MARK ANY RESPONDENT GIVES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Good teachers | 23% |
| Good school facilities, resources | 8 |
| Curriculum, range of subjects offered | 21 |
| Special services, programs provided students | 10 |
| Individual attention given students | 9 |
| Sports, athletics | 13 |
| Other extra-curricular activities | 11 |
| Schools close to home | 6 |
| Good administrators | 6 |
| Size, smallness of school, district | 5 |
| Parent/community involvement & relationships | 13 |
| Discipline/student behavior | 6 |
| Good student transportation | 1 |
| Nothing | 7 |
| Everything | 3 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) _____ | |
| Can't say | 24 |

22. What don't you like about your local public schools? (PROBE:) Anything else? (DO NOT READ LIST BUT MARK ANY ANSWERS RESPONDENT GIVES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Student attitudes, behavior in school | 5% |
| Schools' poor discipline | 12 |
| Some teachers | 13 |
| Weakness in curriculum | 13 |
| Lack of "3 R's" -- basic skills | 7 |
| Bus transportation concerns | 3 |
| Principals; other administrators | 4 |
| Board of education policies | 4 |
| Poor $ management; waste | 6 |
| Salaries are too high | 1 |
| School closing; boundary changes | 2 |
| School taxes too high | 4 |
| Financial, program cutbacks | 7 |
| Nothing | 20 |
| Everything | 2 |
| Can't say | 21 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) | |
| Miscellaneous | 5 |
| Too much emphasis on sports | 2 |
| Substance Abuse | 2 |
| Violence | 2 |
| Poor facilities | 2 |
| Poor communication | 2 |
| Overcrowded schools | 3 |

23. What was the biggest problem the Board of Education in your community had to deal with last year? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT MARK ANY THAT RESPONDENT GIVES.) (PROBE:) Anything else?

| | |
|---|---|
| Finances, millage problems | 37% |
| Teacher negotiations, strikes | 7 |
| Bus transportation | 2 |
| School extra-curricular activities | 1 |
| Closing a school -- changing school boundaries | 5 |
| Discipline | 7 |
| School administrators, superintendents | 4 |
| Curriculum problems | 2 |
| Drugs in school | 3 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) _____ | 4 |
| Can't say | 34 |

24. Have you heard anything about the Michigan State Board of Education's "Blueprint for Action" -- recommendations to improve public eduation?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes (GO TO #25) | 21% |
| No (SKIP TO #26) | 78 |
| Can't say (SKIP TO #26) | 1 |

25. Where did you hear or read about this report? (PROBE:) Anywhere else? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT CIRCLE ALL THAT RESPONDENT GIVES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Newspaper | 59% |
| TV | 24 |
| Radio | 8 |
| School, district publication | 10 |
| Word of mouth | 13 |
| Magazine | 1 |
| School/community function | 8 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) _____ | 2 |
| Can't recall | 2 |

Earlier this year, the State Board of Education approved a long-range plan for improving education in Michigan. It's called "A Blueprint for Action". Tell me if you favor or oppose each of these recommendations.

| | | Favor | Favor if Does not Cost Money | Oppose | Can't Say |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 26. | Every high school and junior high/middle school should have a school day of at least six hours of instruction. | 91% | 1 | 6 | 3 |
| 27. | The school year should be lengthened from 180 days to 190 days for students and 200 days for teachers. | 49 | 1 | 41 | 9 |
| 28. | State funding for local schools should be increased as a condition of lengthening the school year? | 56 | 2 | 36 | 6 |

How do you feel about these state recommended high school graduation requirements? Do you favor or oppose....

| | | Favor | Favor if Does not Cost Money | Oppose | Can't Say | 2 + Yrs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 29. | 4 years of communication skills (reading, grammar, literature, writing, and English). | 93% | - | 5 | 2 | 58 |
| 30. | 2 years of mathematics (including algebra). | 87 | - | 6 | 2 | 42 |
| 31. | 2 years of science (including both biological and physical science). | 86 | - | 11 | 3 | |
| 32. | 3 years of social studies. | 74 | - | 20 | 5 | |
| 33. | 2 years or more in one, or a combination of, foreign language, fine/performing arts, or vocational education. | 80 | - | 15 | 4 | |

| | Favor | Favor if Does not Cost Money | Oppose | Can't Say | More than ½ Yr |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 34. One year of health/physical education. | 89% | - | 9 | 2 | |
| 35. 1/2-year of computer education | 81 | - | 7 | 2 | 9 |
| 36. Students who plan on going to college should study 3 years of math, 3 years of science and at least two years of a foreign language. | 76 | - | 19 | 5 | |

Do you favor or oppose these next recommendations of the State Board of Education?

| | Favor | Favor if Does not Cost Money | Oppose | Can't Say |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 37. Every local school board should develop and adopt a 3 to 5 year school Improvement Plan. | 87 | - | 5 | 7 |
| 38. Local school boards should develop written student performance standards for report cards, promotion, and graduation purposes. | 85 | - | 9 | 5 |
| 39. Every local school district should develop individual learning plans for each student -- to identify and meet the educational needs of each student. | 75 | 2 | 17 | 6 |
| 40. Every school district should adopt uniform homework policies, for students. | 66 | - | 28 | 6 |
| 41. All high school students should be provided with a complete list of subjects necessary for entry in various occupations. | 96 | - | 2 | 2 |

| | Favor | Favor if Does not Cost Money | Oppose | Can't Say |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 42. School districts should develop foreign language programs in all elementary schools (K-6) so students can learn a foreign language. | 59% | 1 | 36 | 4 |
| 43. School districts should increase teacher salaries to attract top college students into the teaching profession. | 54 | 3 | 35 | 7 |
| 44. School administrators, including superintendents and principals, should be certified by the State Board of Education, just like teachers are. | 91 | - | 6 | 3 |
| 45. State funding should be given to school districts with outstanding programs for gifted/talented students. | 71 | 1 | 22 | 6 |
| 46. State funding should be provided so schools can provide special help and classes for pre-school-age children. | 57 | 1 | 37 | 5 |
| 47. State funding should be provided so Teacher Training Centers can be established to re-train teachers/administrators in science, math, communication skills and computer technology. | 67 | 1 | 28 | 4 |
| 48. State funds should be increased so the State Educational Assessment testing of students in reading and math can be expanded to include testing in other subjects, like science and writing. | 74 | 1 | 20 | 4 |
| 49. The State Board of Education should develop a system for the Accreditation of elementary and secondary schools. | 76 | - | 14 | 9 |

50. How do you feel about requiring students to pass reading and mathematics competency tests in order to graduate from high school? Would you favor or oppose that recommendation?

| | |
|---|---|
| Favor | 95% |
| Oppose (SKIP TO #52) | 4 |
| Can't say (SKIP TO #52) | 1 |

51. (IF "FAVOR" ON #50) If a student, after repeated tries, can't pass a competency test, would you favor or oppose granting that student a high school certificate of attendance, rather than a diploma?

| | |
|---|---|
| Favor | 67% |
| Oppose | 25 |
| Can't say | 8 |

52. How about competency tests being used before a student is promoted from elementary school to Middle School/junior high, and from Middle School/junior high to high school. Do you favor or oppose that? (ONE ANSWER ONLY)

| | |
|---|---|
| Favor | 81% |
| Only favor elementary comp. test | - |
| Only favor middle school comp. test | 1 |
| Oppose | 13 |
| Can't say | 4 |

53. Some people also believe that since every community is different, tests given for promotion should be prepared for that school system only. Other people think the tests should be given on a statewide basis. Still others think that they should be prepared on a national basis to be given to students in the same grade throughout the nation. Which of these three ways would you prefer -- having tests prepared on a local, state, or national basis?

| | |
|---|---|
| Local basis | 28% |
| Statewide basis | 35 |
| National basis | 31 |
| Combination of all 3 | 1 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) _____ | |
| _____ | 1 |
| Can't say | 3 |

54. Let me change the subject. (PAUSE) Would you like to have a child of yours take up <u>teaching</u> in the public schools as a career? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | | Gallup |
|---|---|---|
| Yes (GO TO #55) | 55% | 45% |
| No (SKIP TO #56) | 33 | 33 |
| Can't say (SKIP TO #57) | 11 | 22 |

55. (IF "YES" ON #54) Why? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT MARK ANY THAT RESPONDENT GIVES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Is a worthwhile profession | 54% |
| Contributes to society | 14 |
| Is a challenging job | 13 |
| Can make a real difference in a child's life | 18 |
| Should be the child's decision, tho | 22 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) | |
| There is a need for teachers | 5 |
| Good pay | 4 |
| Good hours | 2 |
| Misc. 3% | |
| Can't say 5% | |

56. (IF "NO" ON #54) Why not? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT MARK ANY THAT RESPONDENT GIVES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Low pay | 29% |
| Discipline problems | 25 |
| Personal safety/dangerous | 14 |
| Unrewarding, thankless work | 33 |
| Low prestige as a profession | 20 |
| Not enough jobs open | 11 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) | |
| High stress job | 4 |
| Misc. | 13 |
| Can't say | 7 |

57. Suppose you could choose your child's teachers. Assuming they all had about the same experiences and training, what <u>personal qualities</u> would you look for? (PROBE:) Anything else? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT MARK ANY THAT RESPONDENT GIVES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Ability to communicate, understand, to relate to students | 48% |
| Patience | 18 |
| Ability to discipline, be firm/fair | 26 |
| High moral character | 12 |
| Friendliness, good personality, sense of humor | 16 |
| Ability to inspire, motivate students | 25 |
| Intelligence | 16 |
| Caring about students | 31 |
| Competent | 6 |
| Other (SPECIFY:) Dedicated | 10 |
| Sincere 1% Neatness 2% | |
| Unbiased 3 Misc. 3 | |
| Can't say | 7 |

58. Generally, how would you rate the way the public schools in your community manage their money -- excellent, good, fair, or poor? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Excellent | 6% |
| Good | 31 |
| Fair | 33 |
| Poor | 16 |
| Can't say | 14 |

59. During the next few years, do you think that school spending should remain at the current level, increase at the same rate as inflation, or decrease? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Remain the same | 22% |
| Increase | 66 |
| Decrease | 7 |
| Can't say | 5 |

60. Would you be willing to pay more taxes to help raise the standard of education provided by the public schools in your community?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 63% |
| No | 24 |
| Depends on how much | 9 |
| Can't say | 3 |

61. Many school districts in Michigan are having serious financial problems due to declining student enrollment. If this happened in your district, would you favor or oppose combining your district with a neighboring district, through consolidation or annexation? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Favor combining | 64% |
| Oppose | 27 |
| Depends on millage rate | - |
| Can't say | 9 |

62. Rather than have school district consolidation or annexation, would you favor or oppose keeping your district a separate school district, even if it meant voting for increased school millage? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Favor separate district | 42% |
| Oppose | 41 |
| Depends on amount of increase | 7 |
| Can't say | 10 |

63. When it comes to paying property taxes, are you familiar with the term "circuit breaker"?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 12% |
| No | 87 |
| Can't say | 1 |

64. (While it may not be generally known) (As you know) The term "circuit breaker" means the Michigan Property Tax Relief program (Homestead Property Tax Credit). Are you familiar with how this works.

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 44% |
| No | 54 |
| Can't say | 2 |

These last questions are just to help us classify the opinions of the people we are interviewing.

65. Would you mind telling me the year in which you were born? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Prior to 1918 (Over 65) | 11% |
| 1919 through 1923 (60-64) | 9 |
| 1924 through 1928 (55-59) | 6 |
| 1929 through 1933 (50-54) | 6 |
| 1934 through 1938 (45-49) | 7 |
| 1939 through 1943 (40-44) | 10 |
| 1944 through 1948 (35-39) | 12 |
| 1949 through 1953 (30-34) | 13 |
| 1954 through 1958 (25-29) | 13 |
| 1959 through 1963 (20-24) | 8 |
| 1964 through 1965 (18-19) | 4 |
| Declined to answer | - |

66. What is the last grade in school you had the opportunity to complete? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Grade school or less (grades 1-8) | 4% |
| Some high school | 10 |
| High school graduate (grades 9-12) | 38 |
| Vocational/technical school | 3 |
| Some college | 23 |
| College graduate | 15 |
| Post graduate study | 8 |
| Don't know | - |
| Declined to answer | - |

67. Which of the following income groups included your total family income last year? (READ INCOME GROUPS. CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Less than $10,000. . . . . | 14% |
| More than $10,000, but less than $15,000 . . . | 11 |
| More than $15,000, but less than $25,000 . . . | 19 |
| More than $25,000, but less than $35,000 . . . | 22 |
| More than $35,000. . . . . | 27 |
| Don't know . . . . . | 2 |
| Declined to answer . . . . . | 1 |

68. Would you mind telling me -- are you white, black, Hispanic, or of some other ethnic group? (CIRCLE ONE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Black. . . . . | 10% |
| Hispanic . . . . . | 1 |
| Native American (American Indian). . . . . | 1 |
| White. . . . . | 86 |
| Other. . . . . | 1 |
| Declined to answer . . . . . | 1 |

69. In what type of community do you live -- large city, suburban area, small city or town, a village, or rural area? (GET NAME OF COMMUNITY.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Detroit: _____ | 10% |
| Other city (SPECIFY:) _____ | 17 |
| Suburban area (SPECIFY:) _____ | 26 |
| Small city/town (SPECIFY:) _____ | 24 |
| Village-Rural area (SPECIFY): _____ | 21 |
| Can't say. . . . . | 1 |

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO GIVE ME YOUR OPINIONS.

#

(DO NOT ASK. RECORD AT END OF INTERVIEW.)

70. SEX OF RESPONDENT:

| | |
|---|---|
| Female . . . . . | 56% |
| Male . . . . . | 44 |

INTERVIEWER'S NAME: _____

COMMENTS: _____

_____

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TIME INTERVIEW ENDED: _____

# END

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